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**Law and Order Committee approves the implementation  
and management of a 9-1-1 emergency response system**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee approved amending Title 2 and 21 of the Navajo Nation Code, authorizing the Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission to implement and manage a 9-1-1 emergency response system on the Navajo Nation.

“There is no proper 9-1-1 system on the Navajo Nation and this legislation is giving the responsibility to NNTRC,” said legislation co-sponsor and LOC member Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat).

Legislation No. 0212-13 authorizes NNTRC to develop a 9-1-1 emergency response program and the authority to manage and make changes to the program in the best interest of the Navajo Nation.

“NNTRC accepted the challenge of instituting a regulatory framework to address the lack of a true 9-1-1 public safety answering system and to deter further endangerment of the public,” stated NNTRC executive director Brian Tagaban.

According to NNTRC’s report, a Technical Advisory Committee and Intergovernmental Advisory Committee will be created to oversee daily operations and report back to the Commission.

“The goal of the committees is to develop and create guidelines for the program, as it will begin to progress into a more efficient emergency response program that will meet the needs of the [Navajo] public,” said Tagaban.

LOC member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) expressed a few concerns regarding the Commission’s development of the program.

“I do not want to see the [9-1-1 emergency response] program evolve into a bureaucratic-type system that becomes complicated,” said Delegate Begaye. “I hope NNTRC will find a way to streamline the emergency response process effectively.”

Tagaban stated that advisory committees will be established to ensure that the emergency response program runs efficiently and improves response time to emergency calls by addressing concerns such as jurisdictional boundaries, service plans, and recommendations.

“In dead areas where cell service is non-existent, I do hope we see the emergency response program address this issue because the Navajo Nation is mostly rural,” said Delegate Begaye.

At the end of the discussion, Tagaban said NNTRC will do its best to ensure that the LOC member’s concerns are taken into account, and that the program will seek additional funding at the state and federal level to safeguard against any potential problems that may arise.

The LOC voted 2-0 to approve Legislation No. 0212-13. The legislation will now go to the Naabik’íyátí Committee for consideration.

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